

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-6, 15-20, 22-25, and 34-41 are pending in this case. Claims 1, 3-6, 15, 17, 18, 20, 22-25, 34, 36, 37, and 39 are amended and new Claims 40 and 41 are added by the present amendment. Amended Claims 1, 3-6, 15, 17, 18, 20, 22-25, 34, 36, 37, and 39 and new Claims 40 and 41 are supported by the original claims, specification, and drawings,¹ and therefore add no new matter.

In the outstanding Official Action, the drawings were objected to under 37 C.F.R. §1.83(a). Claims 4, 5, 17, 18, 23, 24, 36, and 37 were objected to for containing informalities. Claims 1, 2, 20, and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Kimura (Japanese Patent Application No. 8-272222). Claims 3 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Kimura in view of Till et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,736,227). Claims 4 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Kimura in view of Mochizuki (Japanese Patent Application No. 4-98278). Claims 5, 6, 24, and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Kimura in view of Takase (U.S. Patent No. 5,970,296). Claims 8-13 and 27-32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Kimura in view of Matsuura et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,740,508). Claims 14 and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Kimura in view of Tanigawa et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,940,668). However, Claims 7, 15-19, 26, 34-38 were objected to as dependent on a rejected base claim, but otherwise were indicated as including allowable subject matter if re-written in independent form.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the indication that Claims 7, 15-19, 26, 34-38 include patentable subject matter.

¹See e.g. Specification at page 10, lines 2-21 and Figure 4.

In response to the objection to the drawings, Claims 9-11 and 13 are canceled. Accordingly, the objection to the drawings is believed to be overcome.

In response to the objection to Claims 4, 5, 17, 18, 23, 24, 36, and 37, amendments are made to Claims 4, 5, 17, 18, 23, 24, 36, and 37 to correct the informalities cited in the outstanding Office Action. Accordingly, the objection to Claims 4, 5, 17, 18, 23, 24, 36, and 37 is believed to be overcome.

Claim 1 is amended to include the subject matter of Claim 7, which was indicated as including allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Claim 1 is believed to be allowable.

Claim 15 is amended to include the subject matter of Claims 1 and 14. As original Claim 15 was indicated as including allowable subject matter, amended Claim 15 (and Claims 3-6 and 16-19 dependent therefrom) is believed to be allowable.

Claim 20 is amended to include the subject matter of Claim 26, which was indicated as including allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Claim 20 is believed to be allowable.

Claim 34 is amended to include the subject matter of Claims 20 and 33. As original Claim 34 was indicated as including allowable subject matter, amended Claim 34 (and Claims 22-25 and 35-38) is believed to be allowable.

Claim 39 is amended to recite similar subject matter to Claim 1, which is believed to be allowable. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 39 is also allowable.

New Claim 40 recites an image forming apparatus comprising:

- an image carrier on which a toner image is to be formed; and
- a recording medium support member configured to convey a recording medium, carrying the toner image thereon, in cooperation with said image carrier;
- a first voltage applying device;
- a second voltage applying device; and
- a third voltage applying device,

wherein said image carrier and said recording medium support member are driven such that the surface of said image carrier and the surface of said recording medium support member move in a same direction as each other, as seen at a

contact position where the surfaces contact each other via the recording medium,

said first voltage applying device is configured to apply a voltage opposite in polarity to a toner to part of a reverse surface of said image carrier upstream of the contact position in a direction of movement of said recording medium,

said second voltage applying device is configured to apply a voltage identical in polarity to the toner to part of the reverse surface of said recording medium support member at or upstream of the contact position in a direction of movement of said recording medium, and

said third voltage applying device is configured to apply a ground voltage to part of the reverse surface of said recording medium support member at or downstream of the contact position in a direction of movement of said recording medium.

New Claim 40 is supported, for example, by the specification at page 10, lines 2-21 and Figure 4. It is respectfully submitted that none of the cited references teach or suggest a first voltage applying device configured to apply a voltage opposite in polarity to a toner to part of a reverse surface of an image carrier upstream of a contact position in a direction of movement of a recording medium, as recited in Claim 40. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the cited references do not, alone or in any combination, teach or suggest “a first voltage applying device,” “a second voltage applying device,” and “a third voltage applying device” as recited in Claim 40. Consequently, Claim 40 is believed to be allowable.

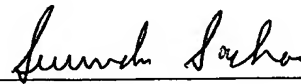
New Claim 41 recites similar elements to Claim 40. Accordingly, Claim 41 is believed to be allowable for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 40.

Accordingly, the pending claims are believed to be in condition for formal allowance.

An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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